

NATURAL HISTORY SERIES

THE HORSE

AND OTHER STORIES



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THE HORSE.

N some countries in the east, and away in the far west of America, the Horse runs wild.

In these regions he is found in herds of many thousands in number, and may be seen running in wild freedom over the plains.

The domestic Horse is a noble, useful animal. He is gentle, and willing to work. He is not made to destroy or to hurt, but to be useful to man. He never takes the life of any other animal for his food; for he feeds on grass, hay, and corn.

The Horse loves his master, and soon learns to know him. A story is told of a soldier who had a favorite Horse, that

never seemed so happy as when his master was on his back. Then he was all life, and full of spirit. At last, in a terrible battle his master was killed. He dropped from his Horse, and his body was found some days afterwards with the faithful animal still standing beside it.



During this long time the Horse had never left the body of his master. Without

food or water, he had stood over it, scaring away the birds of prey. Was not he a noble animal.

THE SOLDIER AND THE HORSE.

A poor soldier was one day passing along a street in London. All at once he was seen to stop, and stand looking at a horse on the other side of the street. "I know him! I know him!" cried he, as he crossed to the other side. "It is my own old horse. Dear old fellow!"

The horse seemed to know the voice. He laid back his ears, and pushed his nose against the hand that stroked him so kindly.

After a few moments the poor soldier put his hand in his pocket, and as he did so he said, "Yes, he shall have it, though it were

my last penny ! I have enough to buy him a feed of corn."

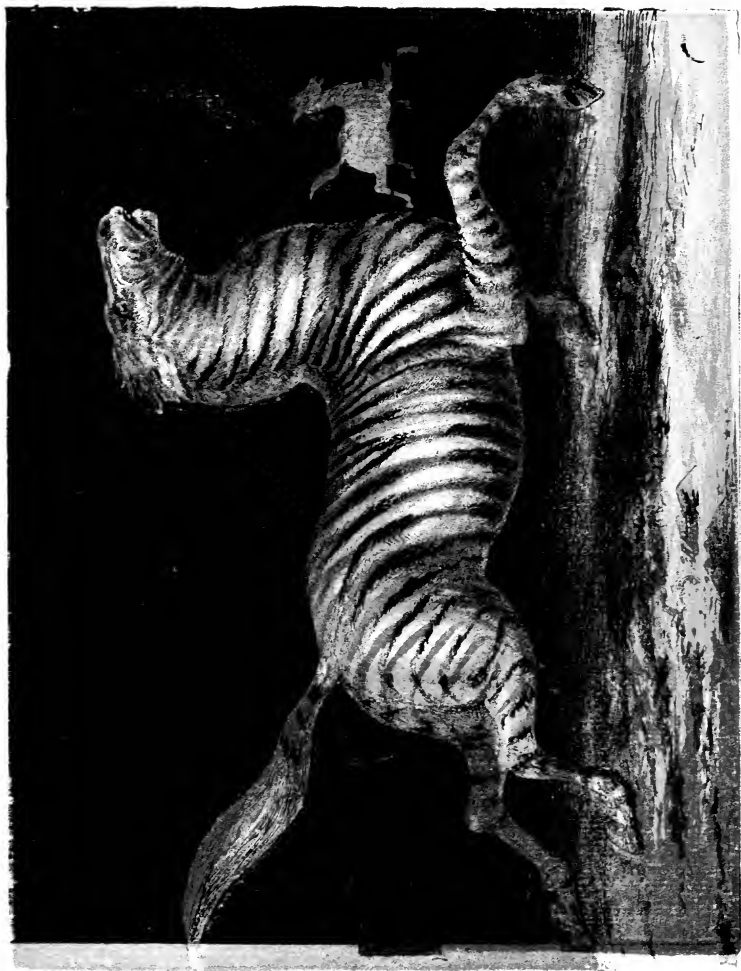
Away he went to bring it, and in a few minutes he came back with the corn, and stood kindly feeding the horse with his own hand.

After staying beside him for some time, he asked where the stable of the horse was, that he might go again and see him some other day.

He then went his way, saying to the horse's master as he left, "Be good to him, poor fellow, and use him well."

It was a beautiful sight, and no wonder that some little boys who stood near, cried out, Hurrah ! when they saw the poor soldier's kindness to his old friend.

It was a lesson on kindness to animals which they would not soon forget.



THE ZEBRA.



HE Zebra is the most beautiful of all the animals of the ass tribe. Its home is in Africa.

Its skin is smooth as velvet. Its body is marked all over with black stripes, which extend down to the very feet.

It is found chiefly in hilly districts, which it loves better than the plains.

It is a very timid creature, fleeing to its mountain home as soon as it is alarmed by the sight of any strange object.

Travelers say that troops of beautiful striped Zebras may often be seen in Africa, drinking at springs of water.

They go to the springs generally between sunset and sunrise.

There they are followed by the lion, who often steals upon them before they are aware.

The moment the Zebras know of the presence of their terrible foe, they flee in the wildest terror to the hills, or across the plain.


It is said that the lion will not go to the springs when the moon shines brightly, as then he would easily be seen.

He loves the darkness, for then the beautiful Zebra more readily becomes his prey.

The Zebra has very seldom been tamed. It has been found almost impossible to reduce this beautiful creature to obedience.



THE ASS

HE poor Ass generally leads a very hard life, and is often seen carrying too heavy a burden.

It is thought, by most people, to be a very stupid animal; but this is not the case.

It is stubborn, because it is too often ill treated. When well treated, it shows itself to be one of the cleverest of domestic animals.

It well repays any kindness shown to it, and becomes very fond of its master.

It soon learns to be familiar with children, and will let several of them ride on its back together.

A story is told of an Ass that was one

time attacked in a field by a fierce bulldog.

The dog sprang at the poor donkey, and tried to bite it; but the Ass seized him with its teeth.

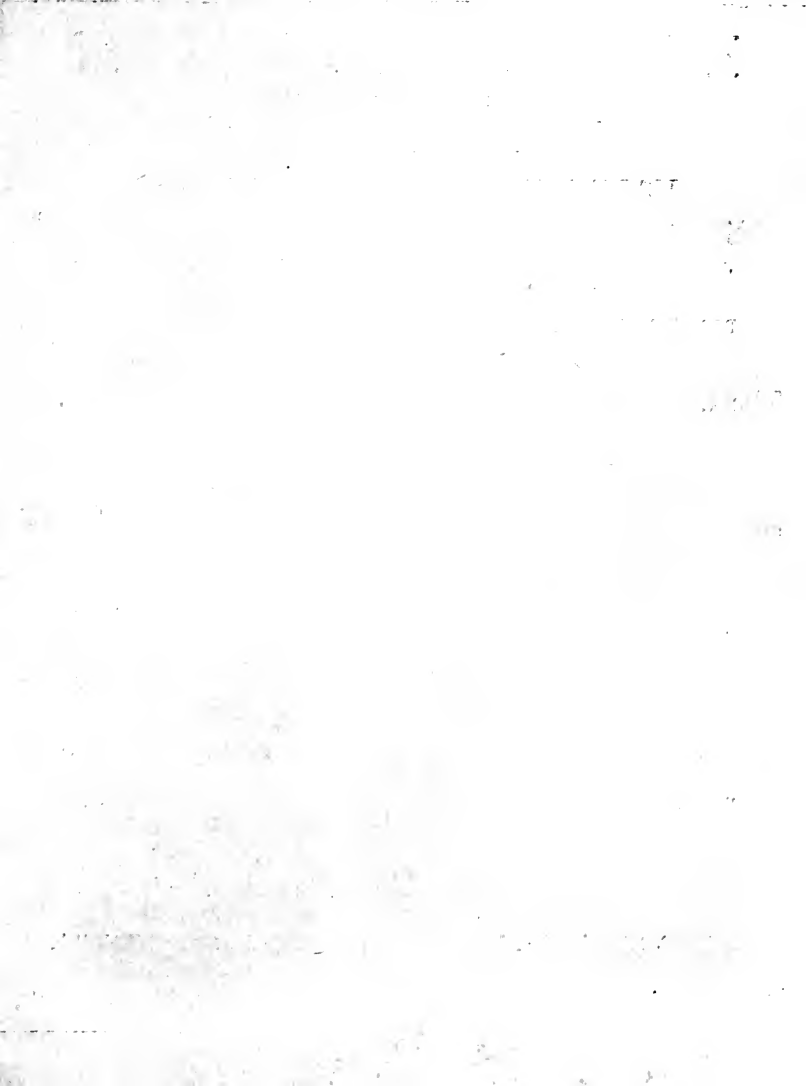
The dog tried in vain to escape; for the donkey held him fast, and carried him across the field to the river side, and there plunged him into the water! The dog never tried to meddle with the Ass again.

A bundle of dry grass, or a thistle from the road-side, with a drink of water from the brook, serves for its daily meal.

In Eastern countries the Ass is found in a wild state. It is celebrated for its swiftness. On hilly or rocky ground, no horse or dog can overtake it.

It lives in troops among the hills, coming down to the plains in the winter months, and returning again when summer begins.





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